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LESSONS
FOR
SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS

AMOS R. WELLS

Wells

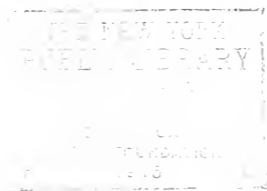
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Ten Don'ts for Sunday-School Teachers

By
Amos R. Wells

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ROY WAIN
CLARK
WARRIL

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Don't Scold



I

Don't Scold

Scolding is often the angry setting forth of truth. Therein lies its temptation. Scolding often says something that ought to be said, but in a way in which it ought not to be said. It is a true word unfitly spoken, and so is like apples of gold in baskets of rough wickerwork.

Scolding is egotistical. When the Sunday-school teacher scolds, he is thinking of himself, of his offended dignity, of his wounded self-love, of his wasted time and pains, of his unappreciated talents. He is not thinking sorrowfully of the harm the children are doing to themselves, their spoiled characters and the peril to their future.

Sunday-school teaching affords many provocations for scolding, because the

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teachers are given little authority, because the discipline is therefore ineffective, because the schoolroom is usually crowded and poorly ventilated, and because the pupils have usually made poor preparation or none at all and so are hard to interest. It is little wonder that they are often restless, mischievous and indifferent, and deserve, if not a scolding, at least some strenuous disciplinary attention.

Scolding grows on one. In this it is like all other bad habits. It becomes easier to scold and harder to praise. It becomes easier to frown and harder to smile. It becomes easier to hold aloof from the pupils and harder to get close to them. If you want these things to happen to you, scold, and keep on scolding.

Scolding is to be avoided because it does no good. Where the matter of what is said is right but the manner wrong, it

is always the manner that makes the impression rather than the matter. This is because the matter comes from the head and the manner from the heart, and everyone instinctively realizes that the heart is a truer witness than the head.

Scolding prevents the right setting forth of the truth that ought to be told. No scolder can go back to the event alone; memory always goes with him. The pupil's sense of your injustice obliterates all sense of his own wrongdoing.

The unfailing rule for all admonition is this: Never correct save in the spirit of love. This usually means the postponement of the correction. "John, I want to see you after school." John will spend the rest of the session wondering uneasily what the teacher is going to do. He will behave for the rest of the session, and that is clear gain. You will find him in a more contrite frame of mind. There

is the disgrace of being "kept." Then, he is alone with you, not bolstered up in his wrongdoing by his comrades, or impelled to defiance in order to be a hero in their eyes. If you find that even then you cannot talk with John in a spirit of love, say that it is a too serious matter, you cannot talk about it now, and arrange for John to call at your home to talk it over. If he does not come, then go to his home. This postponement will still further emphasize what you will finally say to John.

Scold and cold—there is a difference of only one letter. Scolding women used to be tied on a "ducking stool" and dipped into a cold pond. Scolding teachers are dipped into a bath of their pupils' cold indifference. If the children do not run after you, do not plainly admire you and love you, take warning!

One more letter off and scold becomes old. If you scold, it is because you are not in touch with the young life. Get a heart of youth, and you will never scold.

Shakspeare, in "The Taming of the Shrew," pictures a scold conquered by a greater scold, an obstinate woman subdued by a man of greater obstinacy. If you have a tendency to scold, you probably cannot find anyone to effect this cure obligingly for you, but you can cure yourself. You can determine to hold yourself firmly in hand. You can persist in making all excuses you can for the culprit before you scold him. Look through his eyes first. And then, and during it all, you can look through the eyes of the loving, forgiving Christ.

Don't Get Discouraged

II

Don't Get Discouraged

True Sunday-school teachers are treasuries of courage. They are to inspire in their pupils a splendid courage to undertake hard tasks, to face ridicule, to do the right. They are to encourage their pupils to study; and if the boys and girls find it hard to understand and remember, their teachers are to get them to take a new grip on the situation. How are teachers to do this if they have themselves lost their grip on the situation, if they are themselves discouraged and dismayed?

Think, teacher, what you are teaching: That Christ is ready at all times to come to the aid of his followers; that his resources are infinite, more than adequate to any task to which he sends any of his followers; and that all his resources are ours for the asking. How can you teach

all this if you do not believe it? And how, believing it, can you for a minute be discouraged? How can you be so false to your own teachings?

Moreover, discouragement breeds the causes of discouragement. A discouraged teacher lacks the confidence necessary to maintain discipline. A discouraged teacher cannot put heart into the teaching and make it interesting. Every hour of discouragement means more hours of failure, and they mean more hours of discouragement. You have set forth on a miserable circle.

How can you get out of it? Jump out!

What you need is nothing less than a revolution in your ways of thinking.

You have been putting the emphasis on yourself; now put it upon God.

You have been thinking of your weakness and failures; begin to think of God's omnipotence, his unflinching success.

You have been thinking of your pupils' inattention, mischief, irreverence and impudence; begin to think of God's love for them.

You have been thinking of your wasted work; begin to think of the possibilities of all those wasted young lives.

Perhaps you need also a revolution in your methods of teaching. Very likely you have been doing too much and the pupils have not been doing enough. Very likely your teaching has lacked freshness and novelty; there has been no surprise in it. Very likely you have relied too much on your own mental resources and have not read how others would teach the lesson. Very likely you have gone to your teaching weary instead of rested.

But, however this may be, the central difficulty lies deeper—with the heart. You need to found your teaching firmly

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on faith. You need to draw your confidence from the great Teacher.

This new grasp of the eternal realities will give you a new grip on yourself and your class. The change will be manifest in the first word you utter; nay, in your look and bearing before you utter any word. Your pupils will feel the difference instantly. They will perceive in your teaching the ring of victory. They will hear in it a gallant, cheery summons to all that is happiest and strongest. They will recognize in you a fresh air of comradeship. They will respond to all these influences as flowers respond to the sunshine and the breezes.

Discouraged? Throw the thought to the demons that tempt you with it! You have no business with it for an instant. Yours is the king of callings, and your partner is the King of kings!

Don't Fret

III

Don't Fret

The quality that most quickly brings a teacher to grief is fussiness.

Some teachers are irritation incarnate. They enter the schoolroom fuming. They take their places before their classes like pincushions bristling with pins. They begin to question with rasping voices that invite pert replies. They interrupt themselves to take up the collection. They proceed with the lesson, but only to remember the attendance card to be filled out. They fan themselves excitedly with hymn book or paper. They explode at inattentive pupils. They open the window; speedily they close it. They fumble with their Bibles uneasily. They fidget in their chairs. They are as restless as the most restless child ever succeeded in being, and in five minutes

the boys and girls are mere bundles of tingling nerves.

Now the outstanding evidence of a good teacher is tranquillity.

I do not mean that calmness is the fundamental teaching quality; there are other matters more important, and these lie back of the calmness. But serenity is the outward token, preëminently, that a teacher knows his business. Serenity is the atmosphere that makes good teaching possible.

Do not confound this tranquillity with schoolma'am primness. Do not confound it, either, with martinet sternness, or with the self-assurance of egotism. It is far more and better than these.

It stands for experience, though some gifted souls manifest it as soon as they begin to teach.

It stands for physical self-mastery, nerves under the control of brain, muscles under the control of nerves.

It stands for spiritual insight, the knowledge that the Master is present, and that all his wisdom and power are assisting.

It stands for preparation, the thorough study of the lesson as to contents and method, which of itself is almost a guarantee of confidence and of success.

It stands for love, which is so sure of its force and vitality that it never doubts the answering love of the pupils.

And it stands for that mental and spiritual stability which is unmoved by trifles, preserves its equilibrium in whatever turmoil, and gradually brings the turmoil into conformity with itself.

Watch a teacher that possesses this inner calm, and you will see that it has spread to the class. Though surrounded by a wilderness of disorder, that class is an oasis of peace.

Let no one plead an opposite temperament, nervousness, "natural sensitive-

ness," and the like. Nature can be conquered. Man was not given the world to subdue while his little interior world was left ungovernable.

Here is the domain of the will; let it mount the throne and raise the sceptre. Let it bid fretfulness depart and calmness come. Out of the heart are the issues of life. You may be in a boiler factory, yet maintain a spiritual temper which will make that pandemonium as quiet as Eden.

If you do not believe that you can thus command yourself into serenity, try it; only do not try it alone. There is One who is our peace. Receive his Spirit into your soul. Saturate your life with the thought of him. Move in the atmosphere of his presence. With the consciousness of him no fretfulness can coincide. His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace.

Don't Come Unprepared

IV

Don't Come Unprepared

Unprepared teaching is unsuccessful teaching.

Sometimes Sunday-school teachers are foolishly led into the opposite belief by some success that seems accidental. They have come to their classes with little or no preparation, and yet have won and held the attention of their pupils to an exceptional degree. Therefore, they jump to the conclusion that they have been befuddling their brains with too much studying of the lessons, and that what they need are the "freshness" and "spontaneity" that come from offhand talks. Some public speakers have been known to make the same mistake.

Of course, the result in that instance or those instances was illusory. In reality

there had probably been long but unconscious preparation. The lesson simply chanced to have a theme that tapped some reservoir of thought and experience in your life, and naturally this matter that had meant enough to you to be treasured unconsciously was presented with unusual force to your pupils. Besides, you may have been that day in exceptional trim for teaching, physically and mentally, and the school and class conditions may have been exactly right. These circumstances might not concur again in a dozen Sundays. It is folly to rely upon them.

There is always force in spontaneity. It is fine to need only to turn a faucet and the water gushes out. That is so much better than the plodding with buckets to the well, and the labored pumping. But we forget that some one had to make the great reservoirs of water

and build the aqueducts and lay the pipes to your dwelling, and some one had to erect the waterworks and build the giant machines, and some one has to tend those machines night and day, or you would have no "spontaneous" flow of water from your faucet. Compared with this complicated process, it is your pumping that is simple and spontaneous.

Nothing worth while comes without hard work, least of all that supremely worth-while matter, the teaching of Christianity. The sooner the Sunday-school teacher understands that, from the very heart, the better his teaching.

The preparation for teaching a lesson should begin as soon as the preceding lesson is taught. A seven-day spring-board will give you a fine leap into your task—a "spontaneous" leap.

The preparation must deal with method as well as matter, process as

well as facts. It is not enough — to continue our metaphor — to store water in a reservoir; we must lay the pipes right up to where the children live.

Some little surprise in your way of teaching, something "different" in that recitation, will do more to give spontaneity and freshness to it than haphazard, unprepared teaching ever could.

Of course, there is such a thing as over-preparation, loading yourself with so many facts and thoughts and so many teaching plans that the half hour cannot contain half of them, and you confuse the children with a torrent instead of a manageable stream from a faucet. Simplicity and clearness are essentials of wise teaching, and they must be prepared as well as the rest of the lesson elements.

But, bearing this in mind, you will make preparation. You will discover

just what is to be taught. You will arrange it in just the most direct order for teaching. You will plan a course for the truth right into the pupils' interests. And then, when the hour comes, you will have only to turn the faucet, and the cups of cold water, the water of life, will be filled for Christ's little ones.

Don't Forget Your Youth

V

Don't Forget Your Youth

So old! So many Sunday-school teachers are so old! And usually it is the youngest of the teachers in the matter of years!

For age, as is often said and seldom believed, is not an affair of the almanac but of the spirit. You are as old as you feel. In Sunday-school teaching you are as old as you make your pupils feel you are.

Some teachers "get chummy" with the boys and girls instantly. The way they do not do it is quite as instructive as the way they do it.

They do not begin by saying, "Now we'll all be children together, you and I." That merely advertises the fact that you are *not* "children together."

They do not affect a kittenish sprightliness, which is as convincing as the attempt of an elephant to jump a rope. I am six feet two, and once, in a moment of exuberance, I hopped, skipped and jumped over a little impediment on the sidewalk. I shall never forget the uncontrollable, though suppressed, merriment that burst from some youngsters behind me.

They do not grin and simper and chuckle incessantly, or wear what their irreverent pupils will designate as "the smile that won't come off."

In short, they do not do or say a thing that is not entirely natural. They act precisely as they would if they were teaching a class of grandfathers and grandmothers.

And that is half the charm. That is one evidence that they remember their youth. For what child does not want

to be thought older than he is? What child is not intensely complimented by being addressed as an adult? How can you insult children more deeply than by saying to them, "Now, children"? I was greatly surprised at the popularity, in my Sunday school, as a supply teacher, of a certain Doctor of Laws. He is a well-known lecturer on sociology, never known to talk ten minutes without introducing his hobby; yet he is called for persistently by even the younger classes of the Intermediate Department. The reason is obvious on reflection: he never "talks down" to them; he talks up to them.

There is a further reason: he is friendly. He likes to talk, and is an interesting, easy talker.

And there is one more reason: he believes in the capacity of young people to handle large themes and think big thoughts.

When I was a boy, scribbling on every scrap of paper, the subjects of my poems and essays were such as I should not now dare to approach—death, life, love, labor, eternity, heaven. I now write about lawn-mowers and scissors and the lessons of the laundry.

Youth is essentially serious. Remember that, when you teach young folks. The bubbling froth of youth is only the curtain of spray that hides a very Niagara of feeling.

Youth is intensely eager about life, and any teacher that can tell the young folks of life will be their leader.

Youth is quick, scorning elaboration, soon wearied by wordiness. You will win the boys and girls if you are direct, simple, clear, concise.

Youth is unconscious of its deeper self, while comically and awkwardly conscious of its surface self. Appeal to what is deepest; let the surface pass.

Youth is joyous, yes; sprightly, singing, sunshiny. You will not attract the young unless you also have these qualities; but then, without these qualities you will not be much of a Christian!

In short, if you would win the young, be yourself, but be youthful!

Don't Lecture



VI

Don't Lecture

Perhaps I should say, "Don't harangue." "Preaching," the boys and girls call it; meaning no disrespect to genuine sermons, but considerable disrespect to our Sunday-school imitations of them.

The attention of children is proverbially flighty. This does not always mean that their touch-and-go regard for what is said to them is wholly unjustified, since often their attention lasts precisely as long as our remarks are worth attention! The minds of the boys and girls are keener than we always credit them with being. They do not need all the amplifications, explanations and repetitions which we are so fond of heaping upon them. They prefer the materials of

thought, which they are quite capable of amplifying for themselves. Our long-windedness is often the result of our failure to understand their actual powers. They are impatient with our lectures because they do not need them, or think that they do not need them.

If we are quite sure that our pupils do not understand on the first statement, still a tedious elaboration is no way to make them understand; it is only a way to make them restless and heedless. The cure of a misunderstood statement is never another statement; it is a question.

Questions — questions — questions; those are the reliance of the wise teacher. Questions to convict of ignorance. Questions to indicate the points at issue. Questions to restate statements. Questions to arouse interest. Questions to prompt thought. Questions to hold attention. Questions to enlarge the scope

of the discussion. Questions to make applications. Questions to review. Indeed, there is very little in our Sunday-school teaching, beyond the necessary foundation of fact, that may not be best set forth in questions.

The lecture is likely to become oracular and egotistical. The question compliments the one questioned with an implication of his own wisdom and knowledge. The lecture is one-sided. The question is always at least two-sided. The lecture is a club. The question is a hook-and-line. And there is no doubt which is the better for fishing.

Lecturing is usually a result of poor lesson preparation. We talk to fill up the time. There is nothing that we are eager for the pupils to know, so eager that we must make sure that they know it.

Here is a mother sending her daughter to buy a spool of thread, for which she

is in a hurry. The mother does not enter upon an account of thread-making, tracing the thread from the silkworm to the spool. No; after the clear statement of what is wanted she begins to ask questions: "Now, what number did I say?" "Number 80." "And what color?" "The lightest blue he has." "Silk or cotton?" "Silk." "Whose make?" "Johnson's." "And will you hurry back as fast as you can?" "Yes'm." That is teaching.

In short, your teaching is questionable if it is not full of questions! Aim to draw out ten words from the pupils to every one of your own. Aim to elicit illustrations from the class; they will interest the children far more than the illustrations you may gather painfully from books. Lead the children to make their own applications; they will stick far better than your most earnest exhortations.

Take for your pedagogical motto the lazy man's maxim, and never say to the children anything that by any device you can get the children to say for themselves.

Don't Be Stiff

VII

Don't Be Stiff

“Dignified” comes from a Latin word meaning “worth.” It refers primarily to character rather than appearance. The dignitaries of a city are its men of power and substance; that they bear themselves sedately, in the main, may be a consequence, but it is not a necessity.

Not a few Sunday-school teachers believe that dignity, in the derived sense of the term, is necessary to inspire respect and maintain discipline. Their dignity, moreover, is of the ramrod variety. It never smiles. It never jokes. It never expresses warm interest and affection. It is stern, stupid, stiff and stagnant!

Now children do not understand stiffness. There is nothing stiff about those

human eels. Their minds are as flexible as their bodies. Their emotions are frankly on the surface. Their faces are frankly mobile. Their words are promptly sincere. There are stiff children, but they are manufactured articles.

It is only by becoming like the children, in this respect as in most others, that one can enter the kingdom of the Sunday-school teacher. If "manners makyth man," according to the ancient maxim, doubly do they make the successful teacher. There is a pliancy of mood which, when braced by an earnest and sincere purpose, brings a teacher very close to the hearts of the children. There is a ready responsiveness to their gayety, to their little jokes and passing whimsicalities, which in its turn wins from them a quick response.

I know that many deprecate the present tendency toward play in education.

They say that the children of to-day have no mental stamina, that they must be ceaselessly amused, that they must be cheated into work by a game, and that they are not developing the power to apply themselves with grim and conquering determination to disagreeable tasks.

But there need be no disagreeable tasks in Bible study, no tasks to which the boys and girls will not go with the zest of recreation. I scorn aimless trifling as much as anyone, but I plead for such a treatment of Sunday-school work that it shall seem inviting rather than forbidding, a delight and not a duty.

The teacher that plays with his pupils is the most likely to pray with them. If he unbends his backbone, they are most likely to bend the knees. If he manifestly rejoices in the Lord, they are sure before long to join him in his joy.

A command may draw a mile, but an invitation will draw ten miles.

Rigidity and frigidity often go together. They do not always; you may be stiff because you are timid and reserved and awkward, afraid of the children, distrustful of yourself, unskillful in your task. But usually a stiff manner means a cold heart; you do not love the children enough, you do not love Christ enough. If you suspect that you are stiff, seek the cause first of all in your heart. Open your heart wide to the flood of God's love, and it will sweep away all your constraint, and carry you triumphantly into the citadel of the children's affection.

Don't Hold Aloof



VIII

Don't Hold Aloof

There is a fine bit of current slang that talks about "getting next to" a man. It conveys the impression of chumminess, of good-fellowship, of tact, of effectiveness. It is almost a slang synonym of success.

Some teachers never seem to "get next to" the boys and girls. There is always between them and their pupils an impalpable barrier that is, though unseen, quite as substantial as the Chinese wall. It shuts them away from the children completely.

They may smile at their pupils, ogle them, flatter them, wheedle them, snuggle up to them, pretend to be boon companions with them, but all absolutely in vain. Along will come

some one with the art of "getting next to" children, and in sixty seconds he has advanced to the very center of their hearts without trying to.

Aloofness neutralizes the greater part of the unfortunate teacher's words. It is the air space breaking the conductor; and, though the air space is very thin, no electric current can flow over it. The best of one's teaching stops at that fatal chasm.

What is the cause of this aloofness?

There are many causes. The teacher may be selfish or egotistical. She may be anxiously considering her own popularity and success rather than the success of the good tidings of which she is the herald. She may, back of a smiling exterior, wear a crabbed spirit. She may lack faith in God, and be relying on her own poor ability. She may have no real love for the children, but may be teach-

ing merely from a sense of duty or from some lower motive. She may have forgotten her youth, and perhaps she is incapable of sympathizing with youthful spirits. Any one of these flaws would cause a chasm that would negative the teaching of a Socrates.

How can we remedy our aloofness if we become sadly conscious of it?

First, by "getting next to" the children's interests. You must manage to understand and care for baseball, and wireless telegraphy, and tennis, and picnics, and high-school elections, and whatever else is uppermost in your pupils' minds. If you "get next to" these matters you will come close to a large part of the lives of the children.

Second, by "getting next to" the children's respect and confidence. Be absolutely fair and just in all your dealings with them. Never give way to anger.

Never condone wrongdoing. Treat all exactly alike. Children are quick to recognize the "square deal," and value it quite as highly as their elders.

Third, by "getting next to" the children's homes and leading them "next to" your own home. You do not feel that you know an adult till you have seen him or her at home; how can you expect to know a child otherwise, or expect a child to know you?

Fourth, by "getting next to" the children's ambitions, their purposes in life. They all mean to be something. Find out what it is. Encourage them in it, if it is worth while, and they seem fitted for it. Be practically helpful to them. The child has probably never before had anyone approach him thus with earnest talk about himself and his destiny. He will be flattered and pleased beyond measure.

And by this time you will have bridged the chasm of your aloofness, and you will be "next to" the children's hearts; that is, if you really love them. If you do not, you will remain aloof till the crack of doom.

Don't Trifle with Your Task

IX

Don't Trifle with Your Task

A trifler in any occupation is a blot on the face of creation, but the Sunday-school teacher who is a trifler is a blot of the deepest dye.

No task is more important than this. It pierces to the profoundest concerns of life. It reaches the loftiest human interests and possibilities. It extends to the farthest regions of eternity.

To trifle with an employment that involves the spiritual life of any soul is the most dastardly of all follies. Better dance with nailed shoes in a powder-mill. Better make war with no plan of campaign. Better give sick men the first medicine that comes to hand.

And yet it is to be feared that not a few Sunday-school teachers go before

their classes every Sunday with only the slightest preparation, mental and spiritual, for their holy and momentous work. They would not with so little preparation bake a pan of biscuits or cut out a shirt waist.

They have glanced over the Bible passage, as given isolated in the quarterly. They have read the quarterly's questions and have discovered that they can easily answer them. And that is all.

They have not prayed over the lesson, that they may have the promised illumination of the Holy Spirit.

They have not begun their preparation a week in advance that they may have seven days of meditation upon it, seven days for the clarifying of ideas, enrichment of thought and fullness of illustration that are essential for good teaching.

They have not gone to the commentaries and reference books and the

abundant and wonderfully suggestive teachers' helps, but have egotistically concluded that they know enough to teach children without any study. As if one could ever know enough for the teaching of children!

They have not, after this generous studying, carefully formed a plan for their teaching, a shrewd, bright, fresh plan that will arouse the attention of the class and hold it to the end. The lesson is to be taught in the same old stupid fashion that was commonplace and threadbare the very second Sunday they used it.

Ah, teacher, take pride in your task! It is the greatest work in the world, this making of eternal character.

Stand in awe of your task, teacher! It is your test as well as your task. By it your character, and not merely your pupils', rises or falls.

Teacher, magnify your task! You can show as much skill in teaching a dozen ten-year-old boys or girls as Agassiz in teaching the seniors at Harvard. All pedagogical principles come into play. All mental resources may be utilized. All spiritual powers, even the most exalted, may be brought to bear.

Trifling with your Sunday-school teaching does not make it a trifle — you can never do that; but it makes you a trifle. With every noble opportunity tossed aside you are tossing away some portion of your own character. And, on the other hand, every noble opportunity nobly seized and used builds a finer nobility into your own soul, strengthens and inspires you for still grander living. For to him that hath (character) shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

Don't Fail of Faith

1944

X

Don't Fail of Faith

The Sunday-school teacher works for the future. He will see some results at once, but very likely they will be a quite inadequate return for his pains. If he is working for immediate rewards, he will probably be disappointed and discouraged, and will give up the apparently profitless task.

But all eternity is the Sunday-school harvest field. Back of time's mysterious veil the happiest of surprises are in preparation for every faithful Sunday-school teacher. In those seasons of enlightenment, when the secrets of all hearts are disclosed, he will see that the seeds he thought wasted, fallen upon stony ground or shallow ground, or eaten by the fowls of the air, were really not lost after all. He will perceive the words that he spoke

long ago, that he himself has forgotten, that his pupils seemingly forgot, yet returning to their memory in later years to warn, to guide and to inspire. He will find especially that what he was, even more than what he said, made an ineffaceable impression upon these tender young lives; and, in spite of their heedlessness, did mold them in forms of strength and beauty. And as he sees these things even heaven will glow with a brighter radiance and the angels' songs will have a more exultant swing.

It is easy to fail of this faith. It is easy to forget that in dealing with Bible truths we are dealing with the great unseen forces. They are invisible, but they contain the most powerful of all dynamics. God is a spirit. We must worship him in spirit and seek spiritual results. We are all the time seeking for results that are material, tangible, temporal.

Let us rest in faith upon the Bible and upon Him whom the Bible holds forth to human souls. Christ has promised that his Holy Spirit will take these things concerning himself and show them to the world; that includes your pupils. All you have to do is to fashion yourself into a faithful, responsible channel for God's Holy Spirit, and quietly trust him to do the teaching for you, and to get the results.

If we have conscientiously taken up this work of teaching, in obedience to Christ's call; if we sincerely want to please him and not to please ourselves, to seek his glory and not our own; if we are faithfully doing our best, studying the lesson with the best light we can obtain and presenting it in the best way we can learn about; if in all this we are not relying on our own strength at all, but humbly resting our labors upon

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Christ's wisdom and power; if all this is true of us, then to be fearful of the result, to doubt it for an instant, is to fail of faith. Let that failure never be laid to our charge.

To be sure, in the hereafter you may need to grieve over the loss of some of your pupils, but you will grieve with Christ. It will be he and his gospel that have failed; nay, rather, it will be your pupils that have failed, after you and Christ and his gospel have all done your best. We may not require of our faith what even God cannot do—he cannot compel goodness against the human will.

But, with these exceptions — and may they be blessedly few! — the future will be full of glorious rewards for your faith. Through all eternity, I think, you will be hearing of the results of your Sunday-school work in these years of time.

